

REPORT

*Of the Committee of Naval Affairs on the petition of Jonas Duncan, with
a bill for his relief.*

FEBRUARY 17, 1824.

Read, and, with the bill, committed to a committee of the whole House to-morrow.

The Committee of Naval Affairs, to which was referred the petition
of Jonas Duncan,

REPORT:

That the petitioner states, that, in 1812, he was the owner of a house, in the borough of Erie, in the state of Pennsylvania, which, without his consent, was taken possession of by the officers of the navy of the United States, and kept in their use until the year 1816, when it was burnt; that he has received no compensation for the loss of said house, or rent for the same, and prays a reasonable remuneration for the use of his property, and for the loss of it. It appears to the committee, from the deposition of Daniel Dobbins, a sailing master, that, in November, 1812, he took possession of the said house, and used it in storing the United States' iron in it, while building gun boats; that it was subsequently used as a block-maker's shop, until the summer of 1814, when it was accidentally burnt. John Hay and Peter Grawoss unite in deposing that the said house was worth one hundred dollars, and the rent was worth thirty-five dollars a year. It will appear, by a letter from Charles Hay, Chief Clerk in the Navy Department, and accompanying this report, that no payment has been made to the said Duncan for said house. The committee are of opinion that a reasonable rent ought to be paid to the said Jonas Duncan for the time the Government had possession of the house, and for that purpose have prepared a bill, which they ask leave to present.

NAVY DEPARTMENT,

7th February, 1824.

SIR. In returning to you the papers which you left with me yesterday, I have the honor to state, that I referred them to the 4th Audi-

tor of the Treasury, who states, "that the name of Jonas Duncan does not appear in the accounts of Mr. Hambleton or Mr. Salomon, the disbursing officers at Erie, in 1812, 1813, 1814, and part of 1815, but that a person, named James Duncan, was paid for house rent."

I have caused the correspondence of Captains Perry and Sinclair, during the period abovementioned, to be carefully examined, and can find nothing touching the subject.

With great respect,

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

CHARLES HAY,
Chief Clerk.

Hon. JOHN W. CADY,
In Congress.